

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 21 and 26 have been cancelled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 4-7 and 11-15 were previously cancelled. Claims 1-3, 8-10, and 16-20 and 22-25, 27, and 28 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 17, 20, 23-25, 27, and 28 are amended. Claims 1, 17, and 23 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Request for Reconsideration / Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, the Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of at least claims 1, 20, 23, and 27 is not proper and should be withdrawn.

By way of this Reply, the Applicants have amended the claims to address the claims objections and the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs. Additionally, independent claim 1 has been amended merely to incorporate subject matter previously presented in claim 25 and 26 depending therefrom, independent claim 17 has been amended merely to incorporate subject matter previously presented in claim 20 depending therefrom, and independent claim 23 has been amended merely to include subject matter previously presented in independent claim 1. Further, dependent claims 21 and 26 have been cancelled, thereby reducing the number of pending claims.

The Examiner is advised, that no unexamined subject matter has been added to any of the claims by way of this Amendment. Therefore, no additional search of the related art is required or warranted on the part of the Examiner.

All pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of Appeal. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that the Examiner has just now presented new grounds for rejection in this Final Office Action.

Examiner Interview

If, during further examination of the present application, any further discussion with the Applicants' Representative would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Carl T. Thomsen, at (703) 208-4030 (direct line) at his convenience.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1, 2, 21, and 27. In order to overcome this objection, claims 1, 2, and 27 have been amended and claim 21 has been cancelled, thereby addressing each of the objections raised by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1, 17, 23, and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that the original specification does not disclose “a predetermined value or more”, as recited in claims 1, 17, and 23, and that there is insufficient support for the phrase “substantially equal” in claims 17 and 23.

The Applicants respectfully submit that “a predetermined value” is properly disclosed in paragraph [0008] of the original specification and “a predetermined value or more” is properly disclosed in paragraph [0010] of the original specification. Therefore, the phrase “a predetermined value or more” remains in claims 1, 17, and 23.

Further the Applicants have amended claims 17, and 23 to delete the word “substantially”.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, are fully supported by and adequately described in the written description of the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1, 17, 20, 23, 27, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, the Applicants have amended claims 1, 17, 20, 23, 27, and 28 to correct each of the deficiencies specifically pointed out by the Examiner. The

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1-8, 10, 12, 14, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsergas (U.S. Patent Publication 2004/0031343) in view of Yeh (U.S. Patent Publication 2002/0124673); and claims 9, 11, 13, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsergas and Yeh, and further in view of Grant (U.S. Patent 6,361,257).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Arguments Regarding Independent Claims 1, 17, and 23

As the Examiner will note, each of independent claims 1 and 23 as previously presented recites a combination of elements directed to a gear transmission device, including *inter alia* “a first gear positioned on said first gear shaft between said first and second fixed walls, said first gear being axially moveable with respect to said first and second fixed walls” and “a cylindrical portion being formed on a first opposed end face of the first gear”.

(Further, independent claim 1 has been amended herein to set forth the subject matter previously contained in claims 25 and 26, namely “wherein the one face of the plane washer has a surface area at least as large as that of the end face of the second fixed wall, and wherein an outer diameter of the plane washer is greater than an inner diameter of the

cylindrical portion formed on the first gear”. As a result, the plane washer of claim 1 also acts as a shock absorber, because the cylindrical portion and the end face of the second fixed wall do not directly contact each other.)

In addition, independent claim 17 as previously presented includes “a first gear positioned on said first gear shaft between said first and second fixed walls” Further, independent claim 17 has been amended to include *inter alia* “a cylindrical portion being formed on a first opposed end face of the first gear” (previously set forth in claim 20).

On page 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner concedes that Tsergas fails to disclose “a cylindrical portion being formed on a first opposed end face of the first gear”. The Examiner then asserts that Yeh document teaches “a cylindrical portion being formed on a first opposed end face of the first gear”. The Examiner states that

- gear 3 of Yeh teaches first gear 21 of the present invention,
- groove 42 formed in the second gear 4 teaches the cylinder portion 30 of the first gear 21 of the present invention, and
- end portion of shaft 8 and body 9 teach the planar surface of the second wall of the present invention.

However, as can be seen in FIG. 3 of Yeh, groove 42 is merely formed on second gear 4 of Yeh, NOT on first gear 3 as alleged by the Examiner. In addition, both of gears 3 and 4 are merely disposed on shaft 8 between body 9 and retaining ring 6. Retaining ring 6 cannot teach or make obvious a first fixed wall.

In other words, Yeh merely teaches two separate gears 3, 4, with the groove being formed in the second gear 4, NOT in the first gear as required by each of independent claims 1, 17, and 23 of the present invention. Further, neither of first gear 3 and second gear 4 is disposed between said first and second fixed walls, as is required by each of independent claims 1, 17, and 23 of the present invention.

While Tsergas teaches a gear 122 (without a cylinder portion) between first and second fixed walls 134B, 111B, it would NOT be obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the teachings of Yeh (which merely discloses a second gear 4 (having groove 42) that is not disposed between a first and second fixed walls) with Tsergas to arrive at the present invention as set forth in each of claims 1, 17, and 23.

At least for the reasons explained above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 1, 17, and 23 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Tsergas and Yeh.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 17, and 23 are in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 2, 20, 24, 25, 27, and 28 have been amended, and dependent claims 21 and 26 have been cancelled by way of this Amendment.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

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Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §
103(a) are respectfully requested.

All pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

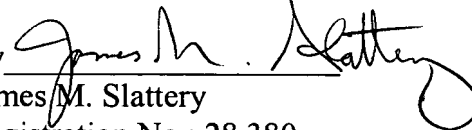
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen, (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030 (direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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